Hack the Core

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/41165241.

Rating:
  Teen And Up Audiences

Archive Warning:
  No Archive Warnings Apply

Category:
  Gen

Fandom:
  Original Work

Relationship:
  Original Male Character(s) & Original Male Character(s)

Character:
  Original Male Character(s), Original AI Character(s)

Additional Tags:
  Virtual Reality, Future, Science Fiction, Hacking, Artificial
  Intelligence, Terrorists, Original Universe, POV First Person, Minor
  Character Death, Short, Cities, POV Male Character, Tron
  References, Wordcount: 1.000-5.000

Language:
  English

Stats:
  Published: 2022-08-20 Words: 2,087 Chapters: 1/1

Hack the Core

by [MiaQc](#)

Summary

In the year 5000, Chiko, a Code Wielder, is given a mission by a mysterious man.

- A translation of [Pirater le Noyau](#) by [MiaQc](#)

Planet: Xirian

Country : Okino

City : Orobis

Current year: 5000

Day: Monday

I half open my eyes and see floating lines of code. *[What the...? Am I still in VR?]*

VR. Short for Virtual Reality.

Most Xirian residents have access to it and they can experience thrills.

[Yet I'm sure I went to bed in my room, in the real world...]

Thought-Log. In Virtual Reality, the thoughts of its users are stored in a Thought-Log, unique to each person.

They are erased each time the user leaves VR for the real world.

I open my eyes wide and I see them. Blue and green code lines. Floating and dancing. I can't identify them. Yet I am a CW. A meager Level 1 CW, yes, but a CW nonetheless.

CW. Short for Code Wielder. Before, they were called Hackers. Depending on their Level, they can manipulate the codes, the VR very foundation, with more or less ease.

CW Levels

Level 0: A sub-level. The CW can barely touch the codes and it's extremely difficult to manipulate them.

Level 1: The first "real" level. The CW can manipulate simple codes. They cannot create them.

Level 2: The second level. The CW can manipulate intermediate codes. They still cannot create them.

Level 3: The third level. The CW can handle advanced codes. They can create codes from this level, but they are relatively simple.

Level 4: The fourth level. At this stage, the CW can create and manipulate most advanced code.

Level 5: A legendary level, where it would be possible to manipulate ANYTHING. No Xirian has ever reached this level.

I should be able to identify these codes without worrying. However, no matter how hard I try and use an Identification Code, nothing happens. The codes remain unidentifiable.

I take a deep breath. I have to stay calm. After all, they're just codes. Without a CW present, they can't hurt me. I just have to disconnect from VR and go to bed. With one hand, I make a bluish window appear. I'm about to enter my personal logout code when the floating code lines turn red. *[Oh oh! That's not good!]*

I throw myself to the ground and the code lines go to destroy my window, then they become blue, green and docile again. They just float and twirl, while I get up. *[Great. What am I supposed to do now?]*

Normally, a code alone, without a CW, cannot be dangerous, unless it is programmed to be so. These seem to have been designed to trap me, to prevent me from returning to reality.

[Um... could I... attack them? But I'm only a Level 1 CW. My offensive codes might not be enough. Otherwise, maybe I can call for help? Send a message to someone I trust.]

I know of only one person in all of Orobis who helps the CW without asking too many questions. Paul. Well, Paul is his User Name, not his Real Name.

User Name. The name used in VR to hide the real identity. A necessary protection against CW.

Real Name. Also called birth name. It's used in reality.

Me, my User Name is Chiko. My Real Name I keep for myself. So,

what do I do? I concentrate and my hands shine with a greenish aura. I hold them out towards the code lines.

"Go! Assault.exe!!!"

Green lines of code come out of my hands and hit the floating lines of code before disintegrating. *[Oh no!]* The floating code lines turn red again. *[NO!]* They hurl themselves at me and I scream in pain.

My VA, that of a teenager with red hair, starts to dematerialize.

VA. Short for Virtual Avatar. The appearance of users in VR.

It must be different from their real appearance.

"Really? I can't let you go like that."

"Huh?"

"Undo/Delete.cmd!"

I find myself surrounded by pink codes, then my VA completely rematerializes. I breathe a sigh of relief and try to see the person who helped me but my eyes only see white, shiny walls.

"Uh... is anyone there?" I asked.

"Forgive me, but I can't show myself to you."

His voice is male and adult, but it is so distorted that I couldn't tell his age.

"Why? Aren't you a Code Wielder, like me?"

"Yes and no. I am a CW, but not like you."

"You're a level 4, then? Like the Syncodices?"

Syncodices. The most famous CW group in the world.

Law enforcement agencies have been trying to arrest them for years because they are wrongly accused of being responsible for global terrorist acts.

The stranger doesn't answer me.

"By the Code, YOU ARE A SYNCODICE!?!"

"No, I am not with them. I'm way above them. I'm at Level 5."

"Level 5? But..."

No one has ever succeeded in reaching Level 5. According to researchers, only a machine could manipulate and create the codes at this level. *[That invisible man... could he be... an AI? But none of our Artificial Intelligences can manipulate code illegally, let alone as advanced as a Level 5. To do that, you'd need an AI with a human consciousness, and no one has managed to create one.]*

"Listen to me... Bonoku."

My breath catches for a second. It was encrypted, but the stranger spoke my Real Name.

Encryption. A protection used as much by law enforcement as by the CW to hide information.

One of the encryptions used consists in reversing letters.

LIKE THIS:

B = Y

K = T

N = M

O = A

U = O

"Tomorrow, terrorists will attempt to destroy Marlie to take over the city."

Marlie. An AI in charge of Orobis city's protection. She projects a dome permanently.

"They're going to blow up her Central Unit, her 'home' as it were. I

give you the mission to stop them."

"Me? Stop them? But I'm only a Level 1 CW, a student! I haven't even finished my second cycle!

School system

Each country has its own education system.

For the inhabitants of Okino, that is to say of Orobis city, education takes place in two Cycles.

It is possible to study further with Cycle Three, but most people find a job.

Cycle 1: Grades 1-7, ages 5-11.

Cycle 2: Grades 1-7, ages 12-18.

Cycle 3: Specialized studies, up to six years, or find a job.

"Why don't you stop them? It's going to be easy for you, Level 5 CW!"

"I can't. I don't have a connection to Orobis. I come from far, far away."

"From another country?"

"Sort of."

"Okay then... why not ask a member of the Syncodices or even Paul?"

"The Syncodices don't know me. They... won't help me. As for Paul, he's a Friend, but... he must remain in the shadows. These terrorists must not know about our connection. Bonoku. You have to do it. I'll give you the codes. This is going to be easy, even for you, Level 1 CW."

The unknown man doesn't seem to leave me any choice.

"Okay, I'll stop those terrorists!" I tell him. "What group do they belong to?"

"That's not important. I'll start the code transfer."

Codes appear and swirl around my VA before entering my virtual

flesh.

"Now that this is done, you can go home. The Teleportation Code I implanted in you will take you directly to Marlie's Central Unit tomorrow, just before the terrorists arrive. I can't tell you when this will happen, but don't forget. The code is only going to work if you have access to VR publicly."

"Publicly?"

"You know what I'm talking about. From an open network, unlike the ones in schools."

Then the mysterious voice falls silent and I am now alone. I disconnect from VR.

The yellowish liquid empties from the VR transfer cylinder and my body, real and naked, emerges. Grabbing a towel, I look around my good old room. Walls with neon lights, a single bed, but with a massaging mattress. A mini shower in the corner. I live in luxury! I towel off and, without taking a shower to erase the smell of yellow liquid - it smells musty - I go to bed.

I wake up early in the morning, long before the singing voice of my personal AI wishes me good morning. My parents are still in bed. I am an only child. No siblings.

This is a Tuesday. While remembering my mission, what am I going to do with my day? I stay home instead of going to school. My parents aren't happy, but who cares? I'm listening to a holographic movie when my body is drawn to the transfer cylinder. I go in and connect to VR.

Rather than appearing in a waiting room for virtual games, or in downtown Viriya, my VA finds itself in front of a shiny core, in a room with black walls. The core is surrounded by protective codes and I see white lines on the walls. *[This is Marlie's Central Unit. I'm in front of her core!]*

Suddenly, I hear voices and turn around. The terrorists are facing me. I can't see them because their VAs are blurred by Masking Codes, but I know there are four of them.

"Hey, what's that kid doing here?" Terrorist #1 asks.

"He's not a kid. I'd say a graduate student." Replies terrorist #4.

"Whatever. Let's do what we have to do." Says terrorist #2.

I know I have to stop them, but how do I use the codes the man gave me besides the Teleportation Code?

"You... I'll stop you!"

I hold out my hands to them and they begin to glow with a red aura. *[What the...? I haven't said <<code_name>>.exe yet!]*

Codes shoot out of my hands and trap three of the four terrorists. Their VAs catch fire. At first I thought it was funny, but when they start screaming in agony, before disintegrating into blood red squares, I hold back from screaming. *[Holy fricking shoot! What were those codes?]*

The surviving terrorist (#3) calls me a "Level 5 monster" before throwing a red-green code at me. The red aura, which is still on my hands, creates a protective barrier, but the code pierces it. My VA gets hit and disappears.

I find myself in a virtual labyrinth. The aura of my hands has disappeared. Panicking, I make a blue window appear to find the exit. I detect it easily but it is not my only concern. Another window, red this time, warns me that a bomb has been planted in the Marlie core by the last terrorist. If I don't get back to the core in time to hack it and destroy the bomb, the Central Unit will explode and my mission will be a failure.

Without wasting time, because every second counts, I start to run. As I know where the exit is, it will be easy to leave the labyrinth for the core. Suddenly, a fire wall appears in front of me. I concentrate and my hands glow with a greenish aura. I hold them out towards the wall of fire.

"Assault.exe!"

Green code lines come out of my hands and destroy it. I continue to run. Suddenly, Electric Bits appear. They are virtual balls, target hunters, and I am the target. I equip myself with a Protection Code and run at the Bits. They get destroyed while trying to attack me. I continue to run and I arrive at the labyrinth's exit.

As soon as I get out, the Teleportation Code brings me back in front of Marlie's core. *[It's time to Wield Code!]* I concentrate and another aura appears around my hands. A white aura. I don't know if it comes from

me or from the codes given by the mysterious man. Just as the codes are about to come out, a window appears. It says: "Core hacking pending. Real Name Needed." *[My Real Name? I can't say it out loud! It's against the law!]*

Even if I'm a CW, and this is crazy, I say my Real Name. Yamato. The codes burst out and hack the core. The bomb is destroyed. Marlie and her Core Unit are saved. My mission is a success! I leave the VR...

Back in the real world, I wonder if the other terrorists in this unknown group will seek revenge. "Level 5 Monster"... then who is this guy, this man who gave me this mission? Is he human? Paul knows him. Maybe I should ask him later? In any case, Orobis' city is saved.

Please to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!